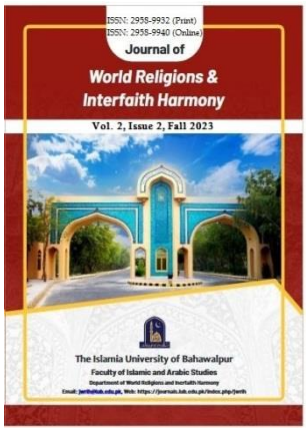

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Title Interfaith Espousal: Islamic Appraisal of Religio-cultural and Socio-economic Compatibility

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Interfaith Espousal: Islamic Appraisal of Religio-cultural and Socio-economic Compatibility

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Abstract

Islam proscribes marriage with non-believers but approves interfaith marriage of a Muslim man with a woman of the book: Christian and Jewish. Primarily, marriage in Islam is considered an instrumental tool that regulates affairs between sexes in favor of a happy family that eventually accomplishes a moral and progressing society. Whereas, interfaith marriage can potentially lay grounds for interreligious harmony yet inevitable incompatibilities among competing religions are likely to shrink the possibility of an exultant social coexistence of families coming from different religions. Resultantly, interfaith marriage often demands the couple to make some mutual, though undesirable and on occasion unacceptable, religious, social and economic compromises. From the matters pertaining to imitation of 'other people', guardianship of non-Muslim, and inheritance to non-Muslim, to the choice of food items, dress code, rituals and social customs, interfaith marriage can originate frequent discordances. Sadly, an interfaith marriage may not provide children with distinct religious training and thereby cause in them a crisis of religious identity. Considering the gravity of the issue, I deal it from Islamic perspective to examine the religious, social and, often overlooked, economic incompatibilities that a couple in interfaith marriage, their families and children may encounter. The present study maintains that regressive preemptive deliberations should be made to avoid a situation where one is left with a choice either to make religious and social compromises with the spouse or to put up with an unsuccessful conjugal life.

Keywords: Interfaith marriage, Islam, Religion, Culture, Socio-economic Compatibility

Introduction:

Islam proclaims to be the complete code of life; by this means, it rightfully maintains marriage as one of its key institutions whereby a morally upright society is established; affairs between the sexes are regulated and a mechanism of training for the resultant progeny is defined. This social contract provides for a caring family system that is desired to be eventually culminated into a pious and peaceful social setup. The Holy Qur'ān registers the idea as: "He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same did He make his spouse, that he might find comfort in her"[1]. Moreover, the verse, "They (your wives) are as a garment to you, and you are as a garment to them"[2], attests the inevitable interdependency between spouses and requires a compatible existence. Furthering the debate, Holy Qur'ān declares, "you are allowed to marry the chaste from among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the Book before you"[3]. Thus, Allāh (the exalted is He) allows Muslims to marry women of the book but the pressing issue of religious, socio-cultural and economic compatibility or otherwise between the parties belonging to two different religions and resultant cultures surfaces concurrently. I will argue in this paper, drawing upon the Qur'ānic injunctions and Islamic Jurisprudence, that whether and to what extent an interfaith marriage is compatible with reference to religio-cultural and socio-economic differences encountered by the spouses and their families.

Amid globalized world, interfaith marriages have increased along with a rise in the issues, in its wake, pertaining to cultural, economic and religious incompatibility. With no doubt, Islam is a distinct religion and a complete code of life that sets its own culture; the same is the case with the other religions. All religions preach their beliefs and religio-cultural practices furnish the ways for their daily-life affairs: rules and customs about birth, clothes, food, education, economics, politics, festivals, funeral, inheritance, etc. In this scenario, interfaith marriages, though religiously permitted, bring with them a Pandora box of clashes and differences in thinking and doings not only for the couples but also for the families and the next progeny. Many a researcher has deliberated on interfaith marriage and its problems with different perspectives. Some scholarly works[4] deal

[1] Surah Al-A'raf 7-189.
[2] Surah Al-Baqarah 2:287.
[3] Surat Al-Ma'idah 5:5.
[4] Ibrahim Wade Ata, *Us and Them: Muslim–Christian Relations and Cultural Harmony in Australia* (Bowen Hills: Australian Academic Press, 2009)*;* Julia Woesthoff, 'When I Marry a Mohammedan': Migration and the Challenges of Interethnic Marriages in Post-War Germany, *Contemporary European History* 22 (2013): 199–231; Francesco Cerchiaro, Stef Aupers, and Dick Houtman, 'Christian-Muslim Couples in the Veneto Region, Northeastern Italy: Dealing

with the religious rules and the traditions available about the marriages of Muslim men to non-Muslim women. Other scholars[5] have studied the impact of interreligious marriages on daily life of the concerned.

Similarly, the identity of children from religiously mixed parents has been a topic of interest in the some recent studies[6]. Keeping this literature review in mind, I will holistically appraise the religio-cultural and socio-economic compatibility of interfaith marriages from Islamic perspective. Grounding my research in Islamic resources (Qur'an, Hadith and Fiqh), I will bring it to the reader that how Islamic laws and practices regarding marriage and all the affairs thereof from Nikah ceremony to inheritance and food choice to the choice of religion for children are different than that of other religions. This study sets to explain that an interfaith marriage is not just a matter of simple religious permission rather it is to be read within the real-time context to understand inevitable religious, social, cultural, and especially economic issues the couples may face and the life-lasting impacts it can render on the children.

The Core Case: Religious Compromises

Religion plays primary role in human life; from birth to death, a believer drives his or her actions and affairs accordingly. A married couple coming from different religions surely meets serious challenges to coexist as it requires much religious compromise or sacrifices from both sides that goes often unacceptable or at least undesired. This religious incompatibility enters in the lives of interfaith couples with the beginning: Nikah, and lasts till the end: Funeral.

with Religious Pluralism in Everyday Family Life', *Social Compass* 62 (2015): 43–60; Francesco Cerchiaro, 'Fighting for What? Couples' Communication, Parenting and Social Activism: The Case Study of a 'Christian-Muslim' Families' Association in Brussels (Belgium)', *Religions* 10 (2019): 270-88

[5] Manijeh Daneshpour, 'Lives Together, Worlds Apart?', *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy* 2 (2003):57-71; Manijeh Daneshpour and Elham Fathi, 'Muslim Marriages in the Western World: A Decade Review*', Journal of Muslim Mental Health* 10 (2016); Gungor Ozcan, *Iki Dunya Bir Aile* (Ankara: Akcag Yayinlari, 2016); Alice Gaya, 'Identity Formation among Mixed Families in a Conflictual Society: The Case of Jewish–Muslim Families in Israel', *Social Compass* 69, no. 3 (2022): 312-328

[6] Fracesco Cerchiaro, 'Identity Loss or Identity Re-Shape? Religious Identification among the Offspring of 'Christian–Muslim' Couples', *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 35 (2020): 503-21; Regine Froese, 'One Family, Two Religions: Child Belief or Child Grief in Christian – Muslim Families?', *British Journal of Religious Education* 30 (2007): 37-47; Fatima Kurttekin, 'Religious Education of Children in Interfaith Marriages', *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 41 (2019): 272-83; Catherine Therrien, 'My Father Is Muslim and My Mother Is Christian: What about Me? Religious Identity and Agency within Mixed Families in Morocco', *Social Compass* 69, no. 3 (2022): 365-385

The first religious clash and incompatibility in an interfaith marriage is about ceremony of nikah. Which religion is to be followed? Where should ceremony of nikah take place, in a Mosque or in a Church? What If a Muslim get married in a church? What will be the nature and status of witnesses? Will Nikah be valid if the witnesses are non-Muslims? What about the presence of the guardian? What does Islam say about these questions?

Clearly commanded at many occasions, imitation of a non-Muslim is strictly forbidden. Hazrat Muhammad Rasool Allah Khatam-un-Nabiyyin Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam declared: "مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْ م فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ"[7] (Whoever imitates a people, he is one of them). Therefore, Nikah can only be valid, be in church or Mosque (though the latter is preferred[8]), if administered as per Islamic rules in the presence of two Muslim witnesses. Similarly, Ibn Ábdīn maintains the necessary presence of two Muslim to be witness on nikah: "وَيُنْدَبُ إعْلَانُهُ وَتَقْدِيمُ خُطْبَةٍ وَكَوْنُهُ فِي مَسْجِدِ يَوْمِ جُمُعَةٍ بِعَاقِدٍ رَشِيدٍ وَشُهُودٍ عُدُولٍ"[9] (And it is ordered to announce it and deliver a sermon and be in the mosque on Fridays with a strong commitment and witnesses). To add, Fatāwā al-hindiāh[10] and Imam Shāfi'ī do also demand presence of Muslim witnesses and guardian from the same religion: وَلَا يَكُونُ وَلِيُّ الذِّمِّيَّةِ مُسْلِمًا وَإِنْ كَانَ أَبَاهَا لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَطَعَ الْوِلَايَةَ بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ[11] (A Muslim cannot be the guardian of the woman of the people of the book even though the Muslim is the father of that woman as Allāh has prohibited the guardianship between Muslim and non-Muslim).

By the same token, Islam stresses heavily on the purification of body and it is acknowledged as the half of faith[12]. The next mismatch surrounds the issue of purification and ablution after menstrual period and intercourse. Fatāwā al-hindiah goes as:

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[7] Abū Dā'ūd, Sulaymān bin Ash'ath, *Al-Sunan,* (Riyād: Dār al Salām, 1999), ḥadith: 4031.

[8] Al-Tirmidhī, Muhammad bin Īsā, *Sunan Tirmidhī* (Egypt: Mustafa Albabi Alhalbi, 1975), ḥadith: 1089.

[9] Ibn Ābidīn, Muhammad Amin, *Rad al-Mukhtār Ala Durr e al-Mukhtār* (Beirūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1992) Vol. 3, 8.

[10] Fatāwā al- Hindiyyah (Beirūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1301), Vol. 5, 346.

[11] Shāfi'ī abū A bdullah bin Idrīs, *Kitab al- Umm* (Beirūt: Dār al-Ma'ārgah, 1990), *Vol. 5,* 8.

[12] Muslim, bin al-Hijjāj, *Al- Sahīh*), chapter, alfazaIl al-woudhu (Riyād: Muktabah Dār al-Salam, 1999) ḥadith: 556.

"الْمُوجِبَةِ لِلْغُسْلِ وَهِيَ ثَلَاثَةٌ) مِنْهَا الْجَنَابَةُ... (السَّبَبُ الثَّانِي الْإِيلَاجُ)..... (وَمِنْهَا الْحَيْضُ وَالنِّفَاسُ" [13]

Moreover, a non-Muslim wife can only be persuaded but cannot be forced to follow the Islamic instructions about purifications. In Fatāwā Tātārkhāniah (as narrated in Fatāwā hindiah)[14], and Al-Muhīt, the opinion about the purification remains the similar: [15]ولا يجبرها على الغسل من الجنابة؛ لأن ذلك ليس بواجب عليها (He cannot force her to perform ablution after intercourse because it is not obligatory for her). Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya categorizes the issue as: A Muslim husband can force his wife to purify herself in the category concerning the matter of legal sexual relation e.g. after menses but he cannot make purification mandatory in the matters of drinking wine and eating pork[16]. In such a contradictory situation, it becomes nearly impossible for the couple to enjoy a happy conjugal life while practicing their religions.

Correspondingly, interfaith marriage turns to be a serious challenge in the wake of death of the Christian/Jewish woman. The questions about rituals, burial expenses, graveyard, etc. are answered differently by different religions. Muslim scholars believe that dead body of non-Muslim woman should be given to her relatives to be buried according to their religion. In otherwise case when relatives are not available, Al-Marghenānī[17] and Ibn ʻAbdīn[18] believe that Muslim husband can wash her dead body, wrap it in a cloth and bury it into a grave. However, following the Qur'ānic instruction[19,] Shāfiʻī maintains that Muslim husband cannot offer her funeral prayer: وَإِذَا مَاتَتْ فَإِنْ شَاءَ شَهِدَهَا وَغَسَّلَهَا وَدَخَلَ قَبْرَهَا وَلَا يُصَلِّي عَلَيْهَا[20] (If the wife of the people of the book died, her Muslim husband can attend her funeral, perform ablution to her, can bury her in hole/grave, but cannot offer her funeral prayer). Moreover, if non-Muslim parents die, then Muslim children can make arrangements for their funeral. But variance of opinion about graveyard

[13] Fatāwā al- Hindiyyah (Beirūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1301), Vol. 1, 14-16.
[14] Fatāwā al- Hindiyyah (Beirūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1301), Vol. 1, 281.
[15] Burhān al-Dīn, Mehmūd bin Ahmad , *Al-Mūhit al-Burhūnī* (Beirūt: Dār Ihyā al, n.d.), Vol.5, 362.
[16] Ibn Qayyim, Al- Jawziyyah, *Ahkām ahl al Dhimmah*, (Beirut, 1997),Vol. 1, 443- 447.
[17] Marghenani, Burhan ul-Din, *Hadayah, Sharah Bidaya tul Mubtada*, (Beirut: Dār-e- Ahya al Turath al Arabi, n.d.), Vol.1, 91.
[18] Ibn Ābidīn, Muhammad Amin, *Rad al-Mukhtār Ala Durr e al-Mukhtār*(Beirūt: Dār al-Fikr, 1992), Vol. 2, 230.
[19] At-Tawbah 9:80
[20]Shāfiʼī abū A bdullah bin Idrīs, *Kitab al- Umm* (Beirūt: Dār al-Maʼārgah, 1990), Vol. 5, 8.

arises if the dead woman was pregnant with a child from a Muslim husband. Nonetheless, the normal custom is as per this story:

> وأما أثر عمر فقال حدثنا سفيان بن عيينة عن عمرو قال ماتت امرأة بالشام وفي بطنها ولد من مسلم وهي نصرانية فأمر عمر أن تدفن مع المسلمين من أجل ولدها.[21]
>
> (A woman from Syria died, she was Christian and pregnant from a Muslim husband, 'Umar (may Allāh be pleased with him) ordered to bury her in Muslim's graveyard because of her child).

Another issue of grave importance in interfaith marriages is religious identity and training of children. In the given scenario, the Muslim father will make his children follow the teaching of Islam while the non-Muslim mother will guide them as per her religion. The Muslim will seek their boys circumcised while Christian wife will favor baptism of newly born babies. This will result in an ambivalent religious identity of the children that will haunt them throughout their lives. Islam in this situation requires that the progeny from a Muslim father must be brought up as Muslim under the general principle of "خَيْرَ الْأَبَوَيْنِ"[22].

The similar conflict develops concerning the religious practices of the non-Muslim wife. Though the husband can persuade his wife but, accordingly to Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, he cannot forbid his wife from worship in church, carrying cross, and observing religious ceremonies[23]. Though difference in religious practices may cause inconvenience in husband-wife relation yet her fasting, praying towards the east, observing Sabbath, reading her Holy Book silently and buying a zunnār cannot be barred[24]. Al-Khallal maintains non-Muslim wife to break her fast and engage her sexually "until she purifies herself from that fast of hers"[25].

Such religious issues and incompatibles render it a matter of serious concern. Therefore, the issues discussed above demand thorough and meticulous deliberations on the part of all concerned parties before opting an interfaith

[21] Ibn Qayyim, Al- Jawziyyah, *Ahkām ahl al Dhimmah*, (Beirūt, 1997),Vol. 1, 443- 447

[22] Abu Bakr ibn Mas'ud Kasani, Kitab badai' al-sanai' fi tartib al-shara'i', (Beirūt: Dār al-kutab al-ilmiyyah), Vol.7, 104.

[23] Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Hārūn Abū Bakr al-Khallāl al-Ḥanbalī al-Baghdādī Khallāl, *Ahl Al-Milal*, Vol.1, 355.

[24] Ibn Qayyim, Al- Jawziyyah , *Ahkām ahl al Dhimmah*, (Beirūt, 1997), Vol. 2, 822-823.

[25] Al-khallal, *ahl al-milal*, Vol. 1 47.

marriage for the good of their own selves, that of their children, family and society in general.

The Pervasive Case: Social Incompatibilities

Aristotle is credited with the definition of human being as social animal. Shared social norms and rituals lay foundation of an integrated society. Consequently, interfaith marriages originate social discordance in wake of inevitable cultural mixing. Therefore, the couple, family and progeny all find themselves mutually alienated in social businesses. Upbringing of children, dress codes, veil problems, functions, eating *halaal* or *non-halaal* food, religious ceremonies, etc. are a few problems to name that are expected to risk workability of interfaith marriages. Jennifer Kaplan in the documentary titled, "Mixed blessings: the challenges of raising children in a Jewish- Christian family", alerts, "When we merge our lives with another whose beliefs differ from our own, conflicts can and often do occur"[26].

In the views of Islamic Jurists it is mother who enjoys the right of up-bringing of child.[27] Badr ul Din Aini says: فالِم أحق بالولد:سواء كانت كتابية أو مجوسية، لِن الشفقة لَ تختلف باختلَف الدين[28] (whether the mother is scripture woman or magosit, she deserves more because the love of a mother is not linked to a religion and it does not get less or more by a different religion). In this debate, Imam Shāfi'ī develops two diverging opinions: resting his argument on the tradition narrated by Rāf'e Ibn Sinān[29], he favors giving choice to children to select religion but in kitab ul-umm, Imām Shafi views that the child should stay with Muslim father[30].

Likewise, in accordance with the Qur'ānic injunction[31] and tradition[32], guardianship (*Khasanat*) relation between a Muslim and a non-Muslim is proscribed; therefore, Ibn Hazam asserts:

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[26] *Mixed Blessing*, directed by Jennifer Kaplan (USA: Spencer Films, 2005), retrieved from http://www.religioustolerance.org/ifm_menu.htm.

[27] Marghenani, Burhan ul-Din, *A Hadayah, Sharah Bidaya tul Mubtada* (Beirut, Dār-e- Ahya al Turath al Arabi, n.d.) Vol. 2, 284.

[28] Aini, BaDār ul Din, *Albanaya Sharah Alhadayah* (Libnan, Dār ul Kutab al Ilmiyah, 2000), Vol.5, 644

[29] Abū Dā'ūd, Sulaymān bin Ash'ath, *Al-Sunan* Book: al Talaq, Ch: Iza Aslama Ahadul Abavayn (Riyād: Dār al Salām, 1999) Ḥadith:2244

[30] Shāfi'ī, *kitab ul Umm*, Vol. 4, 284.

[31] Al Nisa 4-141.

[32] Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book of prayers, chapter: Ma'ani Kulo Mwlud Yuladu Alal Fitrat, Ḥadith:2658.

وَأَيُّ الْأَبَوَيْنِ الْكَافِرَيْنِ أَسْلَمَ؟ فَكُلُّ مَنْ لَمْ يَبْلُغْ مِنْ أَوْلَادِهِمَا مُسْلِمٌ بِإِسْلَامِ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ مِنْهُمَا - الْأُمُّ أَسْلَمَتْ أَوْ الْأَبُ - وَهُوَ قَوْلُ عُثْمَانَ الْبَتِّيِّ، وَالْأَوْزَاعِيِّ، وَاللَّيْثِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ، وَالْحَسَنِ بْنِ حَيٍّ، وَأَبِي حَنِيفَةَ، وَالشَّافِعِيِّ، وَأَصْحَابِهِمْ كُلِّهِمْ[33]

(The immature children will be brought up under the guidance of the parent who has become Muslim and the children will also be considered Muslim).

Now, it may develop into a potential crisis because if non-Muslim spouse is allowed to train, the children will assume non-Islamic ideology and if, later on, Muslim father preaches his religion than it would not be expected and accepted. In both cases, the children will be at loss, spiritually and psychologically.

The dealings at dining table present another episode of discordance in the families with interfaith marriage. Referring to the saying of the Prophet: وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، فَلَا يَقْعُدْ عَلَى مَائِدَةٍ يُشْرَبُ عَلَيْهَا الْخَمْرُ[34], drinking wine and eating pork is forbidden in Islam but this cannot be imposed on a non-Muslim. Consequently, a Muslim family does often object sharing their table with a non-Muslim woman eating and drinking as per her religion. She may adjust herself to avoid inconvenience of in-laws but her husband cannot enforce it on her[35]. Intriguingly, Shāfiʿī rules out the possibility of non–compliance on the behalf of non-Muslim wife against the orders of the husband as drinking wine can effect mental health. He maintains similar opinion concerning clothes, food items and other things[36]. Thereby, the both families are left with either sacrificing their social and religious norms or to avoid common sittings and meeting. The both options are nearly impossible in real life.

Similar socially awkward or undesirable situations develop on functions and ceremonies. The Muslim family will consider its obligation to get their baby boy circumcised while the Christian family on the part of mother will attempt to get the baby baptized. The Christian family of the wife in an interfaith marriage will be observing and celebrating Good Friday, Sunday prayer, Christmas, etc. This said contradictions at the time of festivity can potentially damage the relations in distancing them emotionally.

The dress code is a socially significant and religiously charged matter. Islamic dress-code is well-defined and it seeks compliance in the favor of moral

[33] Ibn Hazm, *Al Muhalla*, Vol.5, 382.
[34] Aḥmad Ibn Hanabl, *Masand Aḥmad*, (Mosastul Risalah, 2001), Vol.23, Ḥadith:14651.
[35] Mahmood Ibn Mazah Al Bukhari, *Al-Muhit al- Burhani*, Vol.5, 362.
[36] Shāfiʿī, *Kitab al- Umm, Vol. 4*, 286.

health of the society. Thereby, it prohibits the western, sleeveless shirts, shorts, bikinis; rather, wearing veil is an agreed-upon Islamic tradition. The non-Muslim wife, as it is not mandatory for her, can choose for herself and children a dress code that may not be acceptable in a Muslim family and society. That will be socially disastrous for them. On the same line, social roles and duties are differently designed and practiced in the societies of different religions. The religious scholars do also keep varied opinions. In this regard, it is pertinent that either husband or wife in interfaith marriage will have to make noticeable adjustments; if not, the result will be a social discordance and eventually unsuccessful family life.

The Worst Case: Economic predicaments

The worst in impact and the least in consideration are the economic problems that a couple and their children may face in wake of an interfaith marriage. It is an established truth that inheritance and other financial matters are duly managed in the light of religious teachings that are not aligned and scaled evenly in different religions. In Islamic law, Muslim and non-Muslim cannot be heir to each other. Hazrat Muhammad Rasool Allah Khatam-un-Nabiyyin Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam clarified: [37] لاَ يَرِثُ المُسْلِمُ الكَافِرَ وَلاَ الكَافِرُ المُسْلِمَ (A Muslim cannot the successor of non-Muslim, and a non-Muslim cannot the successor of Muslim) and [38] لَا يَتَوَارَثُ أَهْلُ مِلَّتَيْنِ شَتَّى (People belonging to two different religions cannot be the successors of each other). The same is upheld by Hazrat Umar (Radi Allah ‘anhu)[39]. Furthermore, all Muslim Jurists are unanimous on this point that neither scripture woman will inherit anything on the death of Muslim husband, nor Muslim husband will inherit anything on the death of a scripture woman[40].

Keeping in view these Islamic rules, the financial predicament of non-Muslim widow of a Muslim husband is writing on the wall. All the property will be inherited by the Muslim relatives. The same will happen to a Muslim husband on the death of his wife. Abdul Razzaq has quoted the tradition in this regard:

عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ جُرَيْجٍ قَالَ: أَخْبَرَنِي مَيْمُونُ بْنُ مِهْرَانَ، عَنْ رَجُلٍ مِنْ كِنْدَةَ يُقَالَ لَهُ الْعِرْسُ، شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ، كَانَ يُسْتَعْمَلُ عَلَى الْجَزِيرَةِ، أَخْبَرَنِي أَنَّهُ أَخْبَرَهُ الْأَشْعَثُ

[37] Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, *Kitab Al Fraid*, Chapter: La yaris Muslim, Hadith: 6764.
[38] Abu Bakr Abd Ar-Razaāq , *Al-Mussanaf* (Al-Maktab Al-Islāmi,Beraut, 1982), Hadith:9857.
[39] Abd ul-Wahab, *Ahkam Al-Ahwal Ashakhsia Fi Asharia Tul Islāmiyya*, (Dār Al Kutab, Almisriyya Alqahira, 1938), Vol.1, 125.
[40] *Fatāwā al-hindiyyah*, Vol.6, 456.

بْنُ قَيْسٍ: «أَنَّهُ مَاتَتْ لَهُ عَمَّةٌ يَهُودِيَّةٌ، فَجَاءَ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ فِي مِيرَاثِهَا يَطْلُبُهُ، فَأَبَى عُمَرُ أَنْ يُورِّثَهُ إِيَّاهَا، وَوَرِثَهَا الْيَهُودُ»[41]

أَنَّ الْأَشْعَثَ بْنَ قَيْسٍ قَالَ: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، إِنَّ أُخْتِي كَانَتْ تَحْتَ مِقْوَلٍ مِنَ الْمَقَاوِلِ فَهَوَّدَهَا، وَإِنَّهَا مَاتَتَ، فَمَنْ يَرِثُهَا؟ قَالَ عُمَرُ: «أَهْلُ دِينِهَا»[42]

Nonetheless, Muslim husband can give a part (1/3 in Hanafī law school) of property to non-Muslim through will but she will not inherit anything else. Another solution is clothed in the form of donation to the wife for economic security. The only way for the widow to claim inheritance is to convert into Islam before the division of property. According to the Shi'i law school, a Christian wife can mention her Muslim children in her will, but her Christian children remain excluded. Similar economic trouble can be faced by a Muslim daughter whose Father accused her disobedience on marrying a non-Muslim and can disinherited her from the property. In any such case, it is all-important and crucial matter to be considered before one enters into an interfaith marriage as this may cause severe financial peril for non-Muslim widow and children.

Contrary to the above given issues, interfaith marriages offer peripheral prospects: it can bring new converts into Islam and develop interreligious harmony. Our history furnishes ample examples in this regard: Caliph Usman, Ottoman Kings, Imran Khan, and Dr. A. Q. Khan are some to name who had interfaith marriages. A deep dive into matter makes the case crystal clear that more than bringing the people from different religions close, mostly such marriages demand significant religious bargaining and compromises that eventually has weakened the fabric of interreligious harmony.

Conclusion:

Islamic laws, though, permit Muslim men to marry women of the book (Christian and Jews) but a detail analysis of real-time issues furnishes inevitable incompatibilities and dispelling discordances. Islam engenders a particular culture which along with religious practices also defines the laws of *Halaal & Haraam*, veil, inheritance, etc. Further, it entrusts mother with the duty of training of children but simultaneously forbid guardianship of non-Muslim on Muslims and vice versa. Similarly, the inherence laws exclude non-Muslim wife and children. Hence, the very beginning of an interfaith marriage raises unavoidable questions on the condition for its validity: the choice of religion, place, customs, and conditions for nikah. The same religious incompatibles confront the couple and

[41] Al-Razzaq, *Al-Mussanaf,* Hadith*:*9858
[42] Ibid. ḥadith:9862

the families in matter about purification, *halaal & haaram* food and rituals of funeral & burial. These religious differences on the part of parent particular impact the lives of children in the matters of their choice of religion, religious training and religious identities. From kitchen to the market, a consensus over choice and code of conduct about food items, dress code, customs, gathering and even ceremonies is nearly impossible. In particular, economic crisis develops on the demise of one spouse over the matters of inheritance and property division. In the light of the discussion, it is recommended that interfaith marriages must be preemptively deliberated to avoid undesirable and sometimes unreligious compromises. In this regard, special importance must be given to the mattes of future religious identities and training of the children. So that, the spirit and essence of the marriage that is to construct a moral and progressive world can be achieved, a happy conjugal life possibly be enjoyed and a settle religious identity of children may be constructed.